

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



July 30, 1986

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 1-71-86

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) UNIFORM NEEDS
ASSESSMENT PROJECT

The purpose of this notice is to inform you of our plans to implement two projects by July 1, 1987 to improve the uniformity of needs assessments in the IHSS Program.

I. BACKGROUND

The State Department of Social Services (SDSS) is committed to improving the uniformity of needs assessments in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program by making them more objective and eliminating the present wide disparities between counties in hours assessed.

Welfare and Institutions Code Section 12301 requires SDSS to assure that IHSS is provided in a uniform manner statewide based on individual need. Although the Department provides statewide forms and procedures, there are no statewide standards which establish a uniform method of determining the level of client need in a given environment. One of the goals itemized in the Department's Report to the Legislature on Uniformity and this year's County Welfare Directors Association IHSS White Paper is to improve uniformity of assessments in the IHSS Program.

We intend to address the need to improve uniformity of needs assessments with the implementation of two interrelated projects: (1) uniform needs assessments and (2) the development of a Disability Index (DI). The tenet of uniformity requires that clients in similar circumstances are authorized a like amount of services and more needy clients receive more services. Achievement of uniformity is based on three prerequisites: workers agree as to the purpose of the program; they perceive and evaluate client needs alike; and they hold the same definition of tasks.

II. UNIFORM NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

We believe, in order to enhance uniformity of IHSS authorizations, workers must evaluate data about a client's physical, emotional and mental functioning, and the impact of the client's environment, significant others and social support system similarly. We propose to increase uniformity by developing improved assessment guidelines and by conducting needs assessment training statewide. We plan to conduct training in March, April, May and June 1987.

III. DISABILITY INDEX

We propose to implement a DI to measure the comparable level of a recipient's need. This Index was developed as part of the "Equity" system being used in Alameda and Marin counties. Recipients' functional dependence, and therefore needs for service, are ranked on a 1 to 5 scale. Thus persons ranked "5" have much greater functional disabilities than persons ranked "2." We plan to incorporate the DI formula into the Case Management, Information and Payrolling System (CMIPS) by June 1987.

IV. FORMS

Implementation of the DI in the CMIPS system will require changes to the SOC 293 form. The use of the revised form will be mandatory when each county begins using the DI. Therefore, counties should order the forms accordingly.

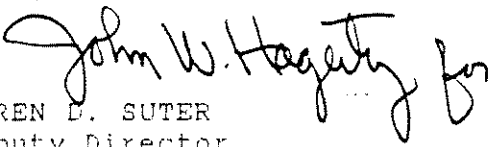
V. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

CWDA has designated a group of county representatives to advise SDSS in the implementation of the Uniform Needs Assessment and DI projects. The representatives are:

Tom McCormick - Alameda County
Lee Hunter - Contra Costa County
Bill Duncan - Fresno County
Rosalind Martin - Los Angeles County
Rose Moore - Madera County
Susan Powers-Kane - Marin County
Dinah Phillips - Santa Cruz County
Shirley Lester - Ventura County
Mary Paige - Yolo County

Suggestions for implementation of these changes may be made through these representatives. In addition to county representatives, SDSS will be meeting with designated individuals representing advocate groups.

Questions about this All-County Information Notice should be directed to Joan Boomer of the Adult Services Bureau at (415) 464-1007 or ATSS 561-1007.

 for
LOREN D. SUTER
Deputy Director
Adult and Family Services Division

cc: CWDA